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In June 1953, the Yunz-tung-men granary of the Peiping Grain Company received a carload of flour from Soochow containing 1,364 bags, of which 1,000 bags were soaked by rain. The Hsi-pien-men granary received a carload of flour from Wu-hsi loaded with 1,355 bags of which 1,164 bags were rain soaked. In addition, wet grain has been transported to Peiping from such places as Chen-chiang Hsien, and Ch'ang-chou in Kiangsu, Pang-fou in Anhwei, and Honan, Sui-yuan, and Shansi provinces.

The largest amount of such spoilage occurred when 28 carloads of grain were transported from Soochow to Peiping; the grain in 26 cars was soaked and spoiled. Up to 22 July 1953, the Peiping Municipal Grain Company, had received a total of 12,580 bags of flour soaked with rain, 350 bags of rice similarly soaked, and nine bags of rice that had molded and spoiled.

This loss is very great, yet many men in charge assume an attitude of irresponsibility. For example, on 21 June a carload of maize was being transported from Sui-hua Hsien in Heilingkiang Province to the Chiao-tso mining district. On the way, 1,880 catties of maize were spoiled by mildew and 10,390 catties deteriorated to the point of having a bad odor. When Chang Hsi-tang, the Chiao-tso mining district Grain Company's Transportation Manager, went to the Chiao-tso Railway Station to discuss measures that could be taken to lessen such losses, the man in the station responsible for shipments said, "We are concerned only with making a good transportation record."

On 3 April 1953, a carload of rice was shipped from Ning-ming Hsien in Kwangsi Province to T'ang-shan in Hopen Province. The car had not been cleaned after having been used to transport asphalt and more than 17,000 catties of rice became contaminated with the odor of asphalt. The same sort of thing happened in shipments to Shanghai, Tientsin, Tsingtao, Sian, Ch'ang-chou, and Suchow.

Such large losses occur so frequently in so many different places that the railway men in charge have become accustomed to the condition and fail to give it serious attention. The units in charge of shipping grain have the mistaken idea that since the railway is responsible for transport the shippers themselves need have no concern as to whether the cars are fit to carry grain, have protection against rain, or are properly loaded.

The following measures should be taken so that property of the nation and of the people will no longer suffer losses:

1. Increased emphasis must be given to the instruction of cadres, heightening their sense of responsibility for serving the people and their ethical standards as to care of public property.
2. To insure the cleaning of the cars, the protection of grain from rain, and the proper loading, the leaders of the basic units should receive repeated personal instruction through inspections and helpful directions.
3. The railway station entrusted with shipping should fulfill the shipping requirements by adequately preparing the tarpaulins, matting, and straw. The cars should be inspected in advance to see if they are clean, have cracks, and if the tarpaulins have holes or are limited in quantity. The cars should be repaired and disinfected before being used.
4. A gondola car should be loaded with a ridge in the center (like a fish's spine) and supports should be used so that the tarpaulin also has a ridge in the center and the rain can run down the sides without wetting the grain.

- 2 -

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According to reports in some parts of Shantung Province, the offices in charge of grain failed to prepare, before the rainy season, the proper protection for the grain and to provide for its safe transportation. When the continuous rains began in July, there were constant leaks in the granaries, the piles of grain became soaked and certain granaries collapsed. As a result, losses were suffered that should never have been permitted.

The grain office in Ko-tse Special Administrative District made an inspection of granaries after the rains. Most of them leaked. Of the grain stored in Granary No 2 in Ko-tse Hsien, 25,000 catties molded, spoiled, or became wormy. Some of the grain had sprouts 3 or 4 inches long. In Ling-i Hsien and Ts'ao Hsien two granaries of the people's government collapsed, with loss of more than 310,000 catties of grain. In Hsin-chuang, a suburb of Tsinan, over 95 percent of the grain piled up in the open was soaked by rain, with the result that 734 sacks of grain showed varying degrees of deterioration, molding and sprouting.

Failure to investigate whether or not those entrusted with its transportation have the proper equipment to protect grain from rain has resulted in much grain getting soaked in transit. For example, the Hui-min Special Administrative District Grain Office transported kaoliang to the Hu-hsi Special Administrative District and 13,200 catties deteriorated in quality and began to sprout from having become wet. The Grain Office of the Ko-tse Special District transported soybeans to Tsinan and 600 bags became soaked in transit.

Everywhere the cooperatives in their buying and selling for others have cases of grain spoilage. For example, in such places as Yu-ts'ai Hsien, Fushan Hsien and T'eng Hsien incomplete statistics indicate that 330,000 catties of bean cakes and soybeans became moldy. In 15 cooperatives of Shih-p'ing Hsien and Yang-ku Hsien, 34,807 catties of stored grain became moldy. In the Ch'ai-pao Ts'un Cooperative of Kuan-t'ao Hsien, 3,258 catties of maize spoiled. In the Ming-chia-chi Cooperative in Ko-tse Special Administrative District, 20,000 catties of wheat sold at retail, were wormy. The village cooperative in Hsia-pao-ssu Ling-ch'ing Hsien, had 45,000 catties of maize spoil. Similar conditions existed in other places.

The most important reason for such losses is the bureaucratism of leaders who have no high sense of responsibility for the people's business, and a disregard for or rejection of inspection. Failure to teach cadres is revealed by the wrong ideas of the cadres who remark, "If we had only a little grain to store there would be no problem. If the grain is soaked, sun it, if it is moldy, sell it." Another reason is the passive attitude of leaders in meeting situations. Even if there is an inspection it is apt to be superficial. If problems arise, they have been seen so often as to go unheeded.

In their work the leaders do not consider all phases of a question. They pay attention only to buying up the wheat with no inspection of its care or of its protection during shipment. Some heads of grain offices do not understand how to care for grain. As a result, when faced with a problem they could settle, they fail to settle it soon enough to protect the grain.

All grain offices and cooperatives should learn much from the problems stated above and should correct their mistakes to meet the twin tasks of buying the grain and preserving it.

- 3 -

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LETTERS FROM READERS COMPLAIN OF GRAIN LOSSES -- Peiping, Jen-min Jih-pao,  
7 Aug 53

Many readers have complained that transportation units have not felt responsibility for the proper shipment of grain. The result has been a serious loss to the nation.

In one instance, water collected at the bottom of a freight car soaking the lowest layer of bags of grain so that some wheat swelled and sprouted. In another case, a worker with the Hua-nan Shipping Office mentioned similar losses in ships along the South China Coast. In one case the Ch'in-chou Special Administrative District Grain Office should have borne the responsibility when it discovered that the grain was wet, but instead of remedying the situation it evaded responsibility by sending the grain off at once.

A false conception was manifested by the Hua-nan Shipping Control Office which held to the principle, "We only want the grain to reach its destination on time. Whether or not it spoils is no concern of ours."

One letter indicated that relief work had been affected by such losses in transport. This letter from Honan Province mentioned that in the winter of 1952 and spring of 1953 parts of Honan Province were disaster areas and were suffering from a serious lack of food. Large quantities of grain came from the Northeast, Inner Mongolia, Suiyuan, Szechwan, and Kwangtung. Because some of the railway employees were irresponsible, some grain was wet and spoiled and so not edible. Such neglect not only caused loss to the nation but seriously affected relief measures.

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- 4 -

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